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Identical letters dated 19 November 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write to inform you of a series of incidents in Southern Israel and the Gaza Strip that endanger peace and stability. Starting late yesterday evening, 18 November 2010, a barrage of rockets and mortars were fired at Israeli towns and civilians from the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip.

These attacks included the launch of a long-range rocket at the Israeli town of Ofakim, causing damage to property and livestock, which was followed by a barrage of seven mortars — some of which apparently contained white phosphorus — that were fired into the area around the city of Ashkelon and into the Eshkol region in the south. In addition, two Qassam rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip into the Merhavim region in Southern Israel.

Intended to target and terrorize civilian populations, these incidents are only the latest in a series of attacks carried out by Hamas and other terrorist organizations, which have launched some 8,800 rockets from Gaza against Israeli towns since 2001, the majority of which since the withdrawal of Israel from the area in 2005.

These attacks reflect the continued build-up of arms and munitions by Hamas and other terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip. These latest incidents — a clear violation of international law — demonstrate the acute security threats facing Israel on a daily basis.

These attacks must be met with the firmest possible condemnation. Furthermore, in response to the attacks from the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip, Israel exercises and will continue to exercise its right to self-defence, as appropriate, and will take all necessary measures to protect its citizens.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Meron **Reuben**
Ambassador
Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations

10-66398 (E) 031210

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